

devoid of current to secure rest and protection. The efficacy of this method, particularly during dark nights, is further supported by the observations of the catch during moonlit nights, which is generally much less than the catch on dark nights.

CENTRAL INLAND FISHERIES

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15. CANNIBALISM AMONG SCORPIONS

The question whether scorpions ever eat each other has not been discussed in Max Vachon's admirable Note on "The Biology of Scorpions" (*JBNHS* 54, No. 1). Having recently kept some of these interesting arthropods, I offer the following observations.

(1) On 3-xi-'73 I obtained a female of the common "grey-and-yellow" type (cephalothorax and abdomen grey on top, legs and pedipalps yellow or pale orange) with some 20-25 babies crawling over her. The babies were so recently born that they were still colourless, only developing the typical colouring some 4-5 days later. Deciding to test the widespread belief that a mother scorpion offers her body for her babies' first meal, I kept the family in a glass jar with no food supply.

The babies died off one by one, while at the same time there was a decrease in the number of bodies (both living and dead) which could be seen. Since I feel reasonably certain that the mother ate none of her babies, this suggests that the stronger progeny devoured the weaker. By early December all the babies had died. Twelve bodies were counted in the jar, and these were left for some more days, during which the mother never touched them. That she was very hungry was proved by the eagerness with which she seized and totally devoured a cricket which I offered, after removing the babies' dead bodies, on 24 December.

The common belief in scorpions' matrophagy thus appears to be just another popular superstition.

(2) On 26-x-'73 two full-grown "grey-and-yellow" scorpions were found, a few inches apart, under a large stone. Not possessing the knowledge to sex them, I assumed that they were male and female, and kept them together in a large glass jar. As food, they were offered large cockroaches; these however seemed to inspire the scorpions with alarm, and were never captured and eaten in spite of being left there

for many days. For many subsequent days I was prevented from catching crickets, and it thus came about that the two scorpions fasted for some seven weeks.

One day, about the middle of December, I examined the jar and found the slightly larger scorpion dead, with the slightly smaller insect in the act of feeding on its left side. All the legs on this side had been bitten off, and the left pedipalp had been sucked hollow; there was also a fairly extensive wound on the body's left side between the cephalothorax and the abdomen.

This observation suggests that scorpions—at least of the same generation—do eat each other if no alternative food is available.

(3) On the other hand, I have three small scorpions (two “grey-and-yellow”, one black) which have lived together peaceably in the same jar for the last two months, during which their food supply of crickets and grasshoppers has had to be very irregular. When these insects encounter each other, they feel one another with their pedipalps and then separate in different directions. They can even crawl over each other's bodies without provoking any aggressive response.

Those persons who may be interested in making further observations, may rest assured that scorpions cannot climb perpendicular glass surfaces and may be safely kept in deep glass jars. The bottom of the jar should be covered in sifted soil, and a piece of coconut shell, fitted with a wire hook on top for purposes of easy removal, makes a satisfactory “stone” for the scorpions to hide under, being light enough to cause no damage in case it is accidentally dropped into the jar.

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16. *ALEURODOTHRIPS FASCIAPENNIS* (FRANKLIN)
PREDATORY ON COCCIDS AND ALEYRODIDS

(With a text-figure)

Franklin (1908) described the species *Cryptothrips fasciapennis* based on a solitary female on the leaf of lime in West Indies and in the very next year erected the genus *Aleurodothrips* with *C. fasciapennis* as the Type. Priesner (1949) synonymised *Cephalothrips spinous*. Bagnall (1909) subsequently transferred it to the genus *Micranthothrips* (Bagnall 1914). *Aleurodothrips fasciapennis* enjoys a wide distribution being recorded from Barbados, Bermuda, Sri Lanka, China, Cuba, Fiji, Florida, Formosa, Hawaii, Java, Jamaica and even